

kill motion. That, I will say at the outset, is inconsistent with previous voting patterns I have had on this issue. However, at this particular point, I must add that I feel that the arguments have not yet been presented to this Legislature as to why 726 is not as good or better than LB 940, and I would like to see both issues out there for us to have some policy choices at the time that we decide whether 940 is better than 726 or if 726 happens to be better than 940. My problem, my concern is with the property tax problem we have in the state, and I have sponsored legislation, as has Senator Moore, on property tax relief by reinstating the sales tax on food. That is, of course, an issue that people did not accept very well. I believe the Revenue Committee has killed those bills but the purpose was that we have to start working toward providing relief, and if it means consolidating districts in certain ways, I guess I support that concept or I am coming to the point of accepting that concept. One of the concerns I have as I look at this issue is there is a bigger concern, and that is the concern I have with Class IIs and IIIs. We have an awful lot of capital construction going on across the state. We have a lot of new gymnasiums being built around the state, a lot of new capital construction projects, a lot of new faculty and administration being added to some of the rural schools across the state where the enrollment has been declining. That is the type of thing that seems inconsistent with property tax relief and cost responsibility. So rather than take a knee jerk reaction to this whole issue and simply say 726 is a bad bill, I guess I am going to withhold my judgment on it at this particular point. I am going to give...I would like to give Senator Johnson a logistical and legitimate opportunity to present the arguments as to why he feels there is a need for this type of consolidation, why he feels his bill might be better than LB 940. I think that probably will enhance the debate as we debate LB 940 as well. I don't think looking at it from a realistic political standpoint that Vard can get the job done but I do believe that he should be at least afforded an opportunity. At this point, we really haven't argued the bill. We have argued the concept but not the logistics of the bill. So as I said, it probably is inconsistent with stands I have taken in previous years, but I am willing to allow the arguments to be presented and I am willing to hear the rationale as to why 940 might be better than this bill, or why this bill might be better than the other. So at this point, I am going to oppose the kill motion.